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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the policy-making function of the board of education as it is viewed in the educational literature. It begins by looking at several definitions of policy and suggests that policy is a statement of expressed philosophy, value orientation, and general direction. It examines the question of why written policies are necessary and does so in terms of such issues as accountability, the value of the policy-making process, and the promotion of efficiency. A historical perspective on the development of educational policy is offered. The author examines several models of policy-making, including the traditional model (characterized by a slow sequence of incremental changes) and alternative models (an open participation of diverse groups, a research-based qualitative approach, a dynamic response to environmental influences, or an open systems theory). The author concludes that two views of the school underlie policy-making. One sees the school as a service organization in which professionals hold the key to policy development, and the other stresses participatory democratic policies. He notes that the group that defines the possible solutions to a problem is the group on top in the power structure. (Author/JM)

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY BY LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.

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"...what I have tried to argue is that the construction and examination of educational policy requires not merely empirical reports and analyses (in the narrow, positivistic sense) but other kinds of knowledge as well. Because education and policy-making are both essentially teleological and moral enterprises, they require the production of possible futures and the critical development of a set of principles for assessing them. Since policy-making is a human enterprise and not a natural process--or, at the very least, since that is the way we best study it--it requires a knowledge of man not abstractly represented in terms of certain factors or in terms of a set of observable, objective relations, but as a conscious, reflective, and intentional being. Since educational policy is also such a human enterprise, it cannot be studied, understood, or practiced satisfactorily apart from the use of those several humanistic disciplines which examine man under those rubics..." (Johnson, 1975:52)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL BOARD POLICY - A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> "The formulation and adoption of...written policies shall constitute the basic method by which the Board shall exercise its leadership in the operation of the school system. The study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its written policies shall constitute the basic method by which the Board shall exercise its management of the schools (NJSBA, 1979)."

Although local boards of education are guided by state code, and increasingly by Federal regulation and judicial rulings, they are left much to their own discretion in making decisions at the local level. Concurrently, there is much debate and misunderstanding among educators and laymen alike concerning the model of operation of school boards, their basic functions, and their limitations. It is generally agreed, however, that school boards serve the community best when they undertake and fulfill the following responsibilities in regard to their collective role:

(a) Formulate policies reflecting broad principles that will guide staff members in fulfilling their roles as educators (Rose, 1970:14);

(b) Determine the goals of public education in their school district (Oklahoma, 1972:6);

(c) Select the most appropriate superintendent for the school district (Michigan, 1972:9);

(d) Appraise the performance of school executives to whom responsibilities and authority have been delegated (Knezevich, 1969:215);

(e) Inform the community about their schools (Michigan, 1972:9); and

(f) Evaluate the activities of the school district regarding previously established goals (Ibid.).

There also exists considerable disagreement as to which of these functions is of primary importance (Ashby, 1968:28-29; Moberly and Stiles, 1978:236; and Connecticut, 1977:37). Beem points out that orthodox theory of educational administration has decreed it to be the fundamental function of the school board to legislate and the superintendent to execute. The school board establishes policy and the superintendent administers the policy. "It has been rather widely held that faithful adherence to this division of basic responsibility is the major gateway to efficient school administration" (Beem, 1953:1). In a doctoral study conducted at Indiana University, Whalen concluded that boards operating from written policies were significantly more effective when evaluated on the basis of 32 criteria than were boards which did not have written policies (1953).

In actual practice, policy formation and administration are interwoven. Many actions of the board such as the selection of the superintendent and adoption of the budget are not actually policy making activities. Likewise, the superintendent is not exclusively an executive. The power to carry out policy is the power to interpret policy. The power to interpret policy carries the power to enlarge, vary, and refine policy. Nevertheless, a primary function of the board is to legislate basic policy.

Policy Defined

In response to the quiry, "What is board policy?",

Dr. Janice Weaver, Chairperson of the Educational Policy Center at Glassboro State College, responded:

> ...to ask exactly what constitutes policy, you will get a range of answers from very vague guidelines, to statements of purpose, to general things schools ought to do,..., to nitty-gritty instructions on how to fill out a certain form...When we talk about policy we ought to mean a broad philosophic statement which serves as a guideline from which other things might be inferred or derived. It's kind of mid-range between outlining purposes and making a rule-by-rule statement. Philosophers refer to it as a meta-rule, a covering law from which you may derive actions (Anderson, 1974:21).

Some writers define policy simply as a guide for management action. Others suggest that policy includes a formulation of goals and objectives along with the procedures for achieving these goals. In summarizing the literature Bogue and Riggs describe school board policy as the normative inclination of our educational organization, "...their reasons for existence, ...and providing a guide to decision-making for the achievement of goals" (1974:355-356).

Byrne (1978:34-37) defines policy as much more than an expression of an educational goal. Policy invariably contains a value component and it must also include the condition which must be met if the goal is to be achieved. Beem defines policy as, "...a statement of the philosophy of the board, ..., an attempt to put into an action - guide the objectives, purposes, and general operating philosophy..." (1953:2).

Johnson (1975:38-41) points to the confusion of policy-making with decision-making caused by a belief that a policy

is simply a rule for making a number of immediate decisions. The danger lies in that policy-making may be interpreted as nothing more than the formation of a rule with the resultant mistake that the process of arriving at a policy is nothing more than an extension of the process by which one arrives at a single decision.

Spuck, et al. (1975:212) defines policy as the allocation of resources within an educational organization. In effect, the process of funding one program or another defines policy. Downey (1977:22-25) and Wergin (1976:75-78) both define policy in terms of the political processes at work in a pluralistic society within which policy evolves.

Policy then is a statement of expressed philosophy, value orientation, and general direction, which form the basis for future action. A policy is not a precise course of action, although policy will imply that certain action is to be taken or to be avoided. A policy is not a specific administrative procedure, although an effective policy will be supported by administrative rules, regulations, and/or procedures.

In a joint statement of the National School Boards Association and the American Association of School Administrators policy is defined as:

> ...statement which sets forth the purposes and prescribes in general terms the organization and progress of a school system. They create a framework within which the superintendent and his staff can discharge their assigned duties with positive direction. They tell what is wanted. They may also indicate why and how much (Connecticut, 1977:38).

To be effective, policy must be broad enough to allow the superintendent and his staff to fully exercise professional ability, judgment, and expertise; yet it must be precise enough to give concise purpose and direction. Policy establishes the philosophy, goals, value orientation, fundamental beliefs, and parameters within which the school district will operate. Whether written or unwritten, "policy" is implied by most actions of the board.

Why Written Policies?

In most states it is the board's legal obligation to perform its legislative policy-making function. The implications of having or not having appropriate board policy in any specific area of school operation are far reaching and must be viewed in that light. With the increasing general outcry for accountability and wider participation by teachers and the public in school decision-making, it would seem prudent for board to be actively involved in the governance of the school district. Also, there is an alarming increase in the frequency with which boards are involved in litigation. In some instances, ...i.e. Monell vs. Department of Social Services, courts have provided monetary damages, making school board members and school administrators liable as individuals for their actions and/or inactions.

The school board which assumes a pro-active stance and holds itself accountable in terms of its legal representative and legislative obligations and moral responsibilities can be

in a position to exercise considerable credibility and power at crucial times. Within this context, the development of written policy remains a paramount responsibility.

The National School Board Association (1975:3, 8-9) suggests boards develop written policies for the reasons indicated below:

(a) To give credence, force, and legality to board action;

(b) To contribute to the board's efficiency. When routine matters are handled by policy, the board can spend more time on important matters;

(c) To foster continuity and stability as board members and school personnel change;

(d) To clarify board-administrative functions and to provide a guide for the discretionary action of those to whom authority has been delegated;

(e) To inform everyone about the board's intent, goals, and aspirations;

(f) To show everyone that the board is running a "business-like" operation;

(g) To minimize the impact of outspoken critics of the board's operating procedures and the goals of the schools by having clearcut and timely written policies which are well researched, reflect sound judgment, and careful planning;

(h) To provide impersonal and impartial guidelines to the school's administration;

(i) To provide the public a means to evaluate the board's performance; and

(j) To provide board members themselves with as complete a compilation as possible of both the written policies and those policies which are embedded into employee contracts,

> board minutes, state laws, federal guidelines, and the "common unwritten" practices and traditions of the school district.

The literature provides additional arguments supporting the development of policy. Johnson (1975:39-43) suggests that the real significance of developing written policy lies in the process of development rather than in the end product. He points out that policies require policy-making and the process involves, "...the acceptance or construction of normative criteria which are continuously legislative both in the analysis of the situations and conditions which call for policies..." He states the essence of the study and development of policy lies in the rational attempt at maximizing the possible goals and alternative courses of action and the weighing of each option in terms of warranted principles and values.

Bogue and Riggs (1974:356) in discussing the need for and proper use of policy indicate that policy serves these positive functions: (a) facilitates delegation of authority; (b) promotes efficiency in decision-making; (c) encourages consistency and equity in decision-making; and (d) maintains organization continuity. Kaagan and Weinman (1977:59) argue that responsible management in the public sector requires organized policy since that is the only way public agencies can fulfill the purpose for which they were established.

In a discussion of the development of school policy for the use of stimulant drugs for hyperactive children, Johnson, Kenney, and Davis (1976:78-80) warn that boards must make

strong policy statements, which provide for a full range of options.

Taylor and Helmer (1978:23-25) in discussing the complex process of policy development which includes, in part, the political interaction of varying individual facts, values, perceptions, and perceived consequences, point out that school administrators rarely have access to the information necessary for decision-making. They argue that all-too-often vocal, self-appointed, special interest groups, whether seeking new services or retrenchment, are perceived as representing the majority view. In the absence of clearcut policies, these groups can have a large impact in the outcome of decision-making processes.

Management in some policy-poor organizations often tends to engage in hesitant, groping or indecisive behavior. Sometimes this behavior results in decisions which establish precidents which are later regretted. In other policy-poor organizations, administrative behavior sometimes includes non-decision making behavior (Volp, 1977:8-9 and Bachrach and Baratz, 1963:632). Inbar (1976:52) in discussing the implementation of innovative policy, identifies two types of administrative planning behavior,...i.e. ritual planning and symbolic planning. Both are psychological attitude and role defensive behaviors which assist in resisting change and aid in maintaining status quo.

In terms of recent state and Federal law and court actions regarding affirmative action plans, equal opportunity

employment (Ornstein, 1975) and school desegregation (McKinney, et al.:1978), the need for board policy statements providing positive philosophic direction to school administrators is evident. The courts have shown little reluctance to order remedial "affirmative action" and in some cases monetary damages for individual and/or collective acts of commission and/or omission.

One final but important argument for the developing of written policies relates to the overall morale with the schools. Unwritten policies are usually expressed in negative, ...i.e. thou shallnot..., rules (Anderson, 1974:22). Instead of encouraging and fostering new and innovative practices, environments which are defined by negative and/or ambivalent rules tend to suppress creative though processes.

Policy Development - A Historical Perspective

No other social function commands more human and material resources than does our free public educational enterprise. On a more abstract level, the local school system, especially in small communities, reflects the identity and symbolizes the values of that community. Education, in many communities provides a focus for the integration of many aspects of community life. Educational policy, therefore, is of consequence not only to the schools but to other subsystems within the community.

Powerful social, political, and economic forces in contemporary society have confronted the education sector and

have shaken a number of basic assumptions about the very purposes, functions, and products of our schools. Increasingly, educational policy-makers are forced into agonizing decisions concerning the allocation of increasingly scarce resources at a time of sharply increasing politicization of educational governance.

A number of distinctive aspects of current educational governance are found in our historical heritage. The earliest schools were formed by ecclesiastical societies. The fundamental purpose of these schools was the practiced application of Bible lessons to every day life in order to remove the threat of "...that old deluder Satan," (Connecticut, 1977:13). Later individual communities started schools - the very beginning of local control - and teachers were hired and paid by residents. In 1647 Massachusetts Law required every town to provide non-sectarian schools paid for by local taxation. (Ashby, 1968:7-10).

The document which heralded our nation's birth contained eloquent language providing for "a government by the consent of the governed." The seed for a "participatory democracy" requiring an "enlightened citizenry" was to be nurtured by the development of free public education which, at a later date, evolved into free public compulsory education.

The Constitution of the United States does not speak to education, however, under the Tenth Amendment, the responsibility for this function has been assumed by the individual states. Today the constitutions of the various states,

augmented by state code and court decision, provide the visible repository of educational power and authority. Within this structure communities have traditionally enjoyed a "local" or "home rule" concept of educational governance with a minimum of state and/or Federal interference (Brodinsky, 1977:11-15 and Geske, 1977:1).

Zeigler (1977:534-539), a noted political scientist sees three distinct phases within the evolution of school district governance, beginning about 1835:

(a) Phase I (1835-1900). School districts were truly governed by a local lay board, however, as school districts grew in size, they became increasingly more political and eventually came under the influence of urban boss-style politics;

(b) Phase II (1900-1968). The process of consolidation of school districts led to the adoption of certain principles of "scientific management" to school administration. Political control diminished as the values of "technically" trained professionals and the desire for efficiency were substituted. In essence laymen turned over control of the schools to "experts;" and

(c) Phase III (1954-1975). Beginning with the Brown decision schools came to be seen as the means to eliminate social and economic equality. Schools became the vehicle for social change and through a rapid succession of Federal, state, and court intervention, much of the "local control" of schools has been erroded.

In an earlier publication Zeigler (1974) points to two opposing theories of school governance. First Zeigler identifies the commonweal theory of school governance. If schools are thought of as commonweal institutions, then they are thought to exist to serve the public at large. Therefore,

under the concept of participatory democracy, the public is assumed to exert an active democratic role. However, if schools are defined in terms of a service institution, such as hospitals and mental health clinics, then the "clients" are assumed not to be competent to judge and speak for their own needs and they are excluded from the policy-making process. Zeigler points out that many school districts are operated as service organizations, excluding public participation in policy development. This is especially true in those districts where the school board assumes the role of a buffer between the superintendent and the public.

The philosophic argument over whether schools are commonweal or service organizations will undoubtedly continue. However, it is worth noting that one of the major outcomes of the Municipal Reform Movement of the Progressive Era, 1890-1910, was the turning over of the governance of our public school system to "nonpartisan" technocrats and insulating them from the irrationality and corruption of "machine" politicians.

Boyd (1978:577-628) in reviewing the impact of the Reform Movement upon educational policy-making points out that the rationality and standardization of the school organization offered by the new breed of business oriented administrators was appealing because running a school system, like running a factory, was viewed as a business enterprise and should not be subject to the whims of partisan political interests.

Professionally trained educators, based on their claim to expertise on the scientific-technical aspects of running a school, took effective control of policy and organizational decisions from lay school boards. In effect the Reform Movement created a persuasive technical authority legitimating the broad control and authority claimed by professional educators. Anglo Saxon Protestant values were reinforced in the schools since there was only one legitimate interest, the public interest, at the expense of the needs, desires, and values of other classes, ethnic groups and interest groups. The operational solutions provided by the Reform Movement kept the potential for participatory democratic processes at arms length. The schools embarked on an effort to homogenize a culturally diverse population with homogenized solutions.

Administrative bureaucracies, imperious to lay participation and parental complaint, developed ostensibly on the view that only those who were technically trained could understand the problems of running a school. Consequently, only the same expertise allowed insight into legitimate solutions. This group was successful in creating an ideology of equality of educational opportunity based upon a meritocracy.

Educators presented the schools as the panacea for society during the 1930's. The political neutrality of the schools, the surplus of resources, and the baby boom of World War II insulated the schools from change. In addition, the excessive demands placed upon educators and boards alike during the post war baby boom focused most attention toward new building and

expansion. Few resources were available with which to focus on how well the schools were achieving their lofty goals. The shattering blow to the technological myth of unquestionable expertise came with the successful launching of Sputnik in 1957 (Wiles 1975:298-299).

The civil rights challenge of inequality of educational opportunity, Brown, and the more general challenge to the goals and organization established by educational technocrats began a dramatic process which continues today. The complex challenges of accountability, restricted resource availability, and the demand for participatory processes including an on-going "constitutional convention" in regard to the governance of our schools have stripped away many of the myths and traditional assumptions. Recent court challenges to the way states finance education are viewed as part of this continuing challenge (Westbury, 1977:6-9).

More recently the Watergate scandal has reinforced the growing recognition that people are no longer willing to simply nod "yes" to those in leadership roles (Conroy, 1974: 415).

The Traditional Model

The conventional process of educational policy-making is characterized by incrementation - sometimes looked upon as disjointed incrementation. Policy-making and decision-making in education are tradition bound, characterized by a slow sequence of incremental changes laced with sudden inspirational

leaps. Most policy issues are resolved quietly and any value conflicts are, "...resolved through low profile politics" (Boyd, 1978:582). Generally, the following are characteristic of policy-making decisions are true:

(a) Education is dependent upon and vulnerable to the societal environment. School goals are multiple and sometimes conflicting. New goals are added while few are dropped;

(b) As new issues appear, the broad existing structure allows only marginal changes. Few decisions are made based upon rational long-range planning and therefore, consideration is given only to a restricted set of options. Any options which would include radical changes are usually excluded; and

(c) Finally, there is a tendency for both policy-making and decision-making to be piecemeal rather than part of a single comprehensive effort. Some decisions are made lacking complete data and in other situations consideration is given to adjusting goals and/or policies in order to minimize disruption and conflict (Ibid.:582-583).

One strongly entrenched myth which remains as a result of the Reform Movement and the era of "scientific management" places the local school board in the role of the corporate board as opposed to that of a political forum. Board members tended to defer to and identify with "professional" administrators to show "unity," and in doing so became more administrative at the expense of representation and/or political roles. Taebel (1977:153-166) in reviewing the literature in regard to the politics of school board elections points out that school boards have become "invisible" governments, run by technocrats, with little visible citizen control. Based

upon the low turn-out for school board elections, he attempts to support the position that a new form of governmental organization has replaced the political machine. He warns, "The old political machine worked assiduously in turning out every vote it could muster, and massive participation was essential for its survival..." It might be the reverse for the new machine.

Educational boardsmanship is controlled by five basic truths:

(1) the public schools belong to the community, not to the board;

(2) law controls every action of the school board;

(3) school boards are answerable to the state, to the courts, and eventually to the people;

(4) every school board action must be reasonable, free of personal whims, and in the public interest; and

(5) all board operations must occur in accordance with procedure which are public knowledge (Brodinsky, 1977: 1-2).

Even though school policy is made by a variety of participants at all levels of government, superintendents are most consistently involved in policy initiation and decision. Tucker and Zeigler (1980) point out that the routinization of school administration and the insulation of the schools from the public have placed the superintendent in a dominant policy-making position in many communities. Further, they note that

in many instances the superintendent controls the agenda of board meetings. This acts to reinforce his position of dominance.

Tucker and Zeigler (1980) have identified a six-step process of policy development including: proposal development, executive recommendations, legislative action, supplementary decisions, implementation and review. They note, however, that superintendents tend to dominate each step.

Mullins (1978:27) in discussing the management style of some superintendents, states that, "...some superintendents blunder into policy making unintentionally; others do it deliberately." In a much stronger accusation Winfield Smith expresses his feelings that a majority of superintendents in Pennsylvania:

> "really don't want board members to have a significant role in policy formation and really don't want teachers to have a role either...they view themselves,..., as the true policymakers and boards as the necessary evil to provide funds,..., (or) as buffers between the superintendent and the community (Ibid.).

The opposite is also true. There are extremely strong boards which tend to dominate their superintendents.

The ideal model provides for the separation of legislative and administrative functions, although there are, as noted earlier, areas of overlapping responsibility. Figure 1 provides an over-view of the traditional model illustrating sources of policy issues and mandated policy. The model as represented is indicative of a "closed" system in that there

exists no obvious direct route into the policy hierarchy process for issues to enter from the public sector. Lay input into the traditional policy model is usually in the form of "private" communication between board members and/or the superintendent and community "elites."

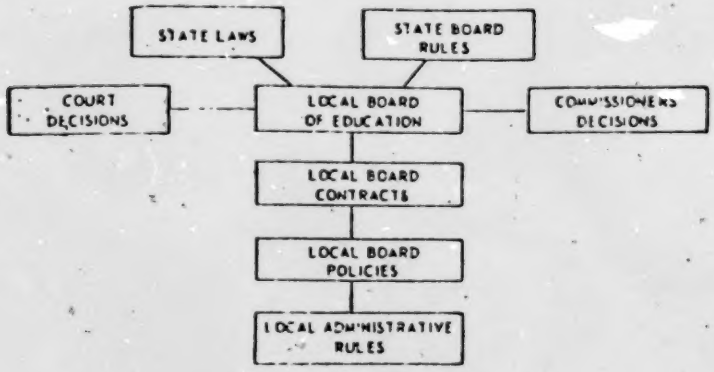

Figure 1 - The Traditional Model

Within the closed system, policy debate arises at the local level from within the interaction of the superintendent and the board, as a result of employee negotiations and/or as a result of state and/or Federal enactments. If public participation is tolerated, it is of an informational nature (Tucker and Zeigler, 1980:18). As noted earlier policy development tends to be episodic, often resulting from unique sets of circumstances rather than long-range planning.

Dickinson (1970) in a research study conducted for the NSBA indicated that at least one-half the existing school districts did not have written policies or a modern system to organize those policies that do exist. He suggests 12 areas

of school administration which require the attention of board policy. These areas are: school district organization; school board operations; business management; facilities planning; students; public relations; fiscal management; general administration; personnel; curriculum; inter-organization relations; and intra-organizational relations.

Alternative Models

Our schools are shaped by a unique mix of history, tradition, and myth. Yet they are held reasonably stable by a set of fairly well accepted core of values even though change is relatively constant with society. Generally, schools are tradition bound and slow to react to the changes which occur within society. When change does take place in schools, the process is incremental in nature and along well established channels, sometimes in response to local leadership or community need, but more often than not to powerful external forces.

Our society is experiencing tremendous changes in population and demographic patterns, economic and environmental conditions and individual and social values. Cistone (1977: 90-93) identifies three phenomena particularly pertinent to educational governance: (1) citizen demands that the school become a more perfect vehicle for personal advancement and social mobility; (2) the generalized dissatisfaction with institutions and the structure of government; and (3) the increased politicization of education. Cistone supports the argument that the latter phenomenon is the most significant

force today in terms of educational policy-making.

Our complex modern society is highly pluralistic. Conflict and competition between various special interest groups is pervasive. Much of the insulation that once protected the schools from outside societal forces has been erroded. Goldman (1977:70-75) indicates that, "...there are no proven effective models by which schools are moved into the future tense." However, according to Toffler (1970:5) the potential for change far outstrips the human capability to change. The complex problems of a pluralistic society require pluralistic solutions.

During the last decade various constituencies of the schools have challenged the authority and decisions which have long been imposed from "above. Each constituency, moves in and out of coalition or acting alone, focuses on an area of interest and works politically to accomplish a new or altered distribution of power, resources, and/or values within the schools. The over-all struggle is one of influence in an increasingly political environment. A common feature of the new school politics is one of the centralization of authority (Wirt, 1976). Special interest group criticism of centralized bureaucracies have led to new participatory processes in educational policy-making. There have been sharp increases in the number of experiments with decentralized structures, community control, and parent advisory committees. Jennings (1980), Iannaccone (1976:2-6), Fuentes (1976:692-695), and

Lucco, et al. (1974) stress the differences in authority-structure between decentralization and community control plans; however, it is significant that policy development is being initiated through structures which are more open to direct participation by individuals and groups who have been traditionally excluded from the policy/decision-making process.

The application of a pluralistic paradign to educational governance, although bitterly fought by some, goes beyond the mere involvement of more people in the policy-making processes. Community control has both positive and far-reaching implications. First, an active participatory model of governance whether it be in the form of actual community control in a large city or a school parent advisory council, reinforces both the intentions of our founding forefathers for a participatory democracy and the concept of local control. Secondly, the efforts which began during the Reform era to make the schools the "melting pot" simply were not successful. Our society is more complex and diverse than ever before. The schools should have the dual function of promoting primary group loyalties while at the same time encouraging unique and diverse cultural values and heritages,...i.e. local community values, and encouraging the cooperation among differing cultural communities.

Mazzoni and Campbell (1976) and Wiles (1975) outline a theory for policy-making which compliments the pluralistic

model. They argue, in terms of an allocative theory, that in an environment of enhanced politicization and inter-group competition for scarce resources, the essence of which is the interplay of influence, policy and the subsequent allocation or resources to carry out that policy is the result of a political consensus of those who are in the role of policy-actors.

Another significant aspect of the increased politicization of school policy is the area of collective bargaining. Wildman (1968) points out that, clearly, teachers are demanding and receiving, either by compromise or concession, a legitimate role in educational policy-making at the local level. Increasingly, professional issues or working conditions such as teacher evaluation, grievance procedures, personnel transfers, reduction-in-force, curriculum, innovative programs, and "academic" freedoms are becoming negotiable issues - the results of which are policy. Also, in an era of scarce resources, salary demands often cause the re-allocation of remaining monies among other functions within the school budget. The re-allocation of resources alters existing policy and creates new policy.

A key observation at this point is that the trend toward opening the policy arena to those traditionally excluded, whether students, parents, teachers, and/or other interests is that this phenomena is a movement away from an incremental centralized bureaucratic approach to policy development.

Ingram (1978:19-23) discusses three other orientations to policy development:

(1) The empirical-rational approach assumes policy is developed or proposed by those who have the insight into the problem and the best solution. This model of policy development has dominated educational governance since the Reform era;

(2) The power-coercive approach assumes that those with less power will comply with those who hold political, economic, or moral power. This model is best exemplified by the "top down" strategy and is akin to the political model. However, the application of the political model involves the development of consensus as opposed to the simple application of power;

(3) The normative-re-education model provides some insight into the interaction of the political model of governance. This model assumes people are social and are guided by norms, relationships and expectations of groups to which they belong. They are also guided by internalized values, habits, and meanings. Therefore, the political interactions of individuals within and between groups provides for political consensus making and the development of new policy.

Ingram continues by indicating that the normative re-education model is applicable to the present trend in school governance because it is inherently participatory and provides for the decentralization of control on an issue by issue basis.

Volpe (1977), and Kaagan and Weinman (1977) call for a qualitative approach to policy development. They indicate that few policies are developed based upon prior research. More often than not, researchers are called upon to evaluate the results of policy. They contend that a systematic planning model which identifies options and costs prior to the development of educational policy is of more value particularly in

light of increasingly scarce resources.

Ebersole (1973) discusses a variation of the political model within the context of David Easton's input-output model, he terms equilibrium analysis. According to this theoretical approach to policy development environmental influences,...i.e. a RIF policy proposal, acts to disturb the political stability of an institution, creating disequilibrium and breaking the simple input-output flow. During the subsequent political interactions, an authority emerges which re -establishes the previous equilibrium or determines a new state of balance from which future distrubances depart. Given a politicized environment the issue can no longer be addressed from a position of autocratic isolation. The real problem or disequilibrium is the scarcity of resources, not the RIF proposal. Each party develops and applies strategy proposals in order to re-establish stability,...i.e. reduce staff, freeze salaries, raise taxes, reduce class size "to the benefit of the children," re-allocate among budget functions, etc. The outcomes become feedback through the environment to occasion new inputs for continuing political action within the system. Policy development is seen as the continual dynamic response to environmental influences.

Taylor and Helmer (1978) assert that numerous authors have theorized that participatory decision-making might lead to outcomes which are superior to those developed by centralized processes simply because of the greater knowledge made

available upon which to base decisions. Figure 2 illustrates an informational system which is of the open type.

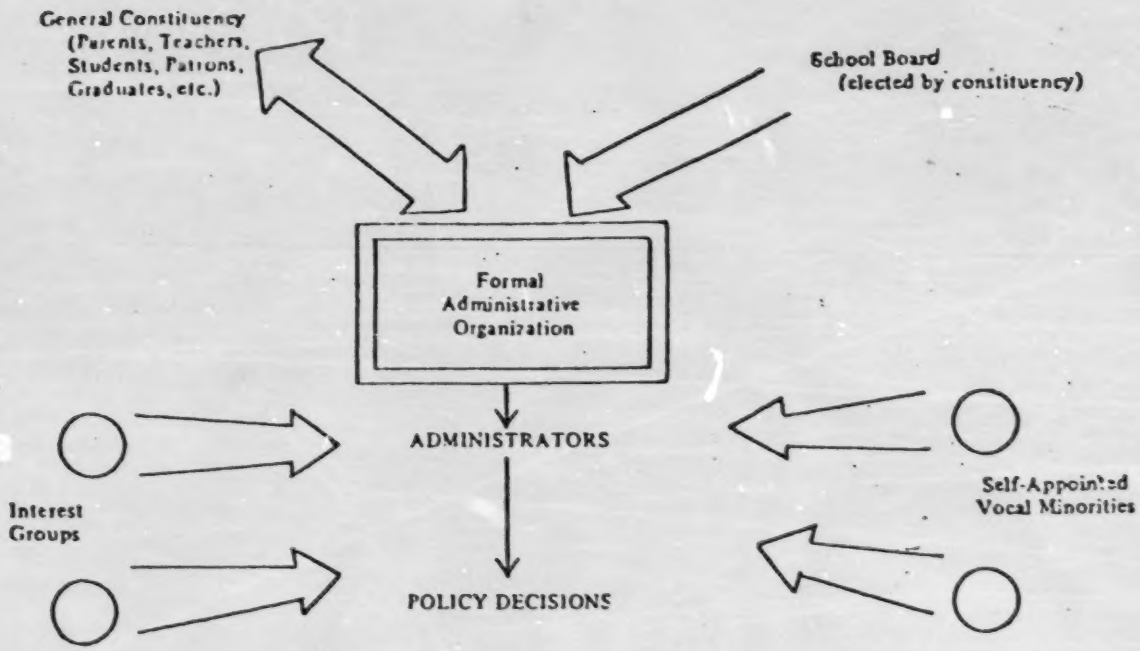

Figure 2 - Informational Influences on Policy Decisions

They indicate that policy-makers have a choice of either continuing to "muddle through" without attempting to gather information for defining or selecting alternatives, or they can actively attempt to gain more and better information from the constituencies they serve.

Wergin (1976) offers an Open-Systems model for organizational policy-making. The basic model, Figure 3, is similar to the political model as it assumes an active political environment. The political actors are the schools and the society.

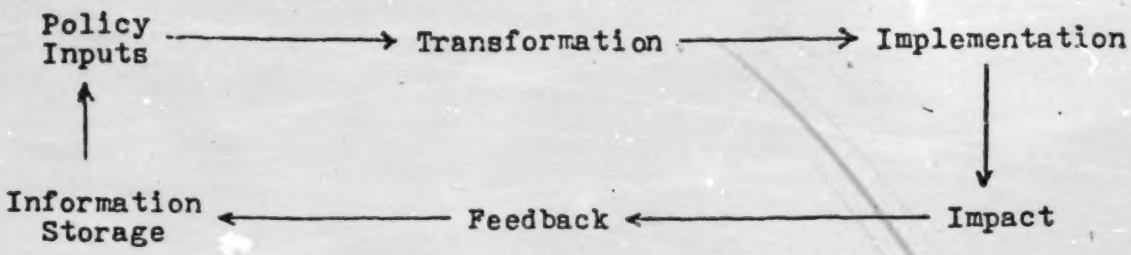

Figure 3 - An Open-Systems Model of Organizational Policy Making.

The Open-Systems concept focuses on the mutual interdependence between an organization and its environment using a simple systems analysis,...i.e. input-output-feedback loop, technique. The emphasis of this abstract model is upon the organization and its environment as opposed to earlier models' emphasis on the political interactions of policy-actors. Figure 4 illustrates, in flowchart format, the sophistication of the Open-Systems model. Within this system policies are defined as political decisions resulting from political pressures represented by vested interests both from within and without the organization. Three corollary propositions accompany the model:

(1) Policy choices occur only when personal values are in conflict.

(2) Question of worth may be decided only by means of political decision. Successful policies are, therefore, those which are built upon a broad base of political support; and

(3) Organizational policies are usually not able to satisfy all participants and must, therefore, develop strategies for dealing with value conflict. (Wergin, 1976:82-83).

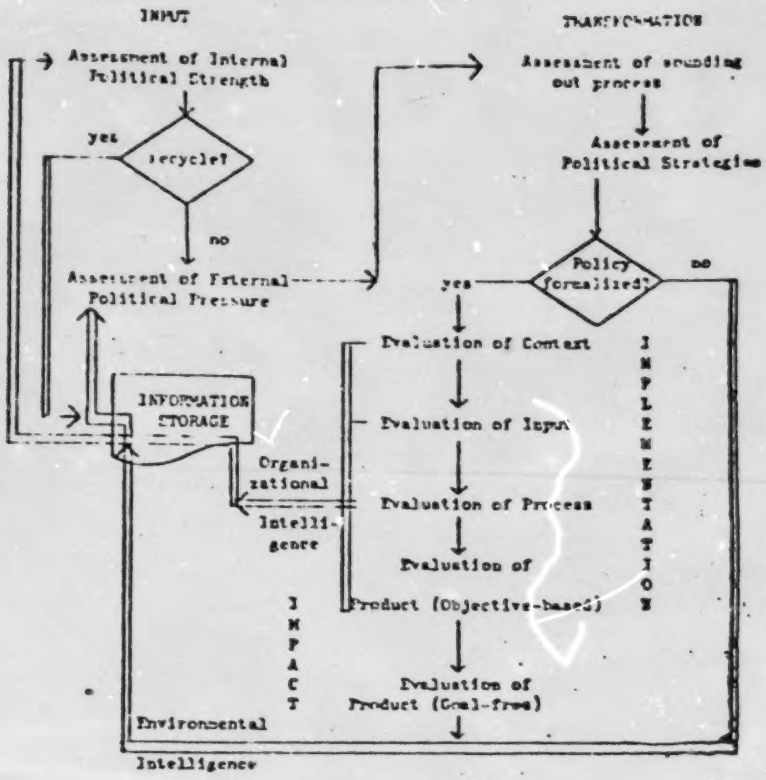

Figure 4 - The Open-Systems Model. (Feedback processes are indicated by double lines.)

Concluding Remarks

Current theory of educational governance looks upon policy decisions as essentially political in nature. This simplicity is complicated by the practices and traditions which have their roots in the Reform Movement. In essence two theoretical schools of thought exist. The first revolves around the concept of the school as a service organization within which trained professional administrators are thought to hold the key to problem solving and policy development. Lay participation is discouraged in policy development. The second theory involves the concept of the commonweal institution.

This concept supports notions of participatory democratic processes, relates to the fundamental notion of governance of our nation's founders' local control and the current concepts regarding our pluralistic society. The processes involved are as sophisticated as society itself.

Pellegrin (1967:11-12) indicates that even though school boards and/or advisory councils pass upon alternatives proposed by the administration, the group which defines the array of possible alternative solutions to any one problem will be the group which will be on top in the educational power structure.

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